

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

407 W. IMPERIAL HIGHWAY, SUITE H, PMB #230, BREA, CALIFORNIA 92821

TELEPHONE: (310) 589-3230

FAX: (310) 589-2408

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 30, 2006

To: The Governing Board Members



From: Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

Subject: **Agenda Item XVIII: Discussion and possible action regarding City of Diamond Bar proposed sphere of influence amendment to include the Aera property, west of State Route 57, Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board discuss this item and provide guidance to staff regarding any potential Wildlife Corridor Conservation Authority (WCCA) action, such as bringing an item to a future meeting to take a position on the City of Diamond Bar's proposed sphere of influence amendment to include the Aera property, west of State Route 57, Los Angeles County, and any associated annexation.

Background: During meetings in 2005, the Los Angeles County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) considered adding two areas (Area 1 and Area 2) to the sphere of influence of Diamond Bar (see attached map). Area 2 encompasses approximately 2,084 acres, comprised of the Aera property, west of, and adjacent to, State Route 57, in Los Angeles County. WCCA has been tracking and commenting on the Aera Master Planned Community development. WCCA previously commented on the Notice of Preparation for the 2,935-acre, 3,600-dwelling unit Aera Master Planned Community development proposed on the Aera site, both west and east of State Route 57, in unincorporated Los Angeles and Orange counties. Area 1 of the sphere of influence amendment encompasses approximately 100 acres of a residential community and is located just northeast of the Aera property, west of, and adjacent to, State Route 57. According to Los Angeles County LAFCO staff, the Area 1 addition was approved by LAFCO, but Area 2 was not.

The mission statement of LAFCO is to encourage the orderly development and reorganization of Local Governmental Agencies, essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well-being of the State. According to its website, the Commission [LAFCO] also is charged with developing and updating spheres of influence for each city and special district within the county. Spheres are planning tools used to provide guidance for individual proposals involving jurisdictional changes, and are intended to encourage efficient provision of organized community services and prevent duplication of service delivery. Territory must be within a city or district's sphere in order to be annexed. More information on LAFCO can be found on the

web at <http://www.lalafco.org/>. According to LAFCO staff, including land in a City's sphere of influence means that the City is able to provide services without coming to LAFCO for approval. LAFCO staff stated that every five years the sphere of influence boundaries are updated. The list of Commissioners is attached.

According to Los Angeles County LAFCO staff, the Area 2 amendment was not approved due to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) issues. The proposed amendment to the City's sphere of influence was included in a report presented to LAFCO, entitled East San Gabriel Valley Final Municipal Service Review (excerpts attached). This report states that the developer proposed the area be annexed to Diamond Bar in the future. According to minutes from a past City Council meeting of the City of Diamond Bar (see attached), it appears that the City is considering annexation of the Aera property, in addition to the amendment to the sphere of influence.

WCCA staff will send to the City of Diamond Bar a letter requesting any CEQA documents (once they are available) for the City of Diamond Bar subject sphere of influence amendment and/or annexation. The Governing Board may want to give staff any other direction, such as bringing an item to a future WCCA meeting for WCCA to oppose City of Diamond Bar's proposed sphere of influence amendment to include the Aera property, west of State Route 57, Los Angeles County, and any associated annexation.